

## Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

### Milkweed for Monarchs

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

The monarch is probably America's best known butterfly, and the subject of extensive conservation efforts as it has experienced a dramatic decline in recent years, to the point the Fish and Wildlife Service has been asked to place it on the endangered species list.

Key to monarch conservation is milkweed. It's the sole plant used by monarch caterpillars, thus essential for the monarch to complete its life cycle. The decline of milkweed on the landscape has likely played a role in the monarch's decline, so planting milkweed is a simple, and important, step in conserving the butterfly.

There's more than one kind of milkweed, so you want to get the best species for your situation. As with picking any type of plant, there are some basic considerations to help you select the best milkweed for your setting – how much light does the site receive, what type of soil will it be planted in, and how much space will it have to grow. Contact your local cooperative extension office to help you work through these questions for your area, then start asking for milkweed at your local nursery.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.